

REMARKS

Claims 1-34 are pending in the application. Independent claims 1, 7, 12, 18, 22-24, and 30 are being amended to put the application in condition for allowance; Applicants reserve the right to file a continuing application with claims directed to the cancelled or broader subject matter. No new matter is being introduced by way of these amendments.

Applicants' Claim 1 as amended recites, "a graphical user interface having selectable graphical user areas ...; a graphical overlay positioned over said graphical user interface, the graphical overlay including (i) a first step indication associated with a first step in a given task directing the user's attention to a first selectable graphical user area and (ii) a next step indication associated with a next step in the given task automatically displayed upon the user's completion of the first step; and descriptors, corresponding to the steps and distinct from the graphical user areas, that are highlighted in a manner indicating which step is being performed." The underlined portion indicates the amendment. Support for the claim amendment can be found at least in Figs. 9-12 and 13A (ref. nos. 402a-e) and in the specification as originally filed at least at pages 18-21.

Claims 1-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mayuzumi et al. (U.S. 5,781,191) ("Mayuzumi") in view of Perks et al. (U.S. 5,764,960) ("Perks").

The present Office Action at page 2 states Mayuzumi includes a graphical user interface having selectable graphical user areas (Fig. 15A, B1-B6 of Help Screen B). The Examiner is of the view that the graphical user areas include step indications on the graphical user areas (e.g., Mayuzumi, Fig. 15A, Help Screen B, "Open Door A"). Mayuzumi does not further include "descriptors, corresponding to the steps and distinct from the graphical user areas, that are highlighted in a manner indicating which step is being performed."

The present Office Action at page 3 also states Perks shows a graphical overlay with a first step indication and next step indication at Perks, Figs. 3-7, col. 5, lines 1-20. Perks shows a graphical overlay in the form of a drop-down menu. A drop-down menu does not "drop down" unless specifically selected by a user via a graphical user interface menu bar and is only active (i.e., continues to be in a "drop-down" state) while the user interacts with it. In other words, every time the user interacts with the graphical user areas, the Perks graphical overlay (i.e., drop-down menu) disappears. Therefore, the Perks graphical overlay cannot be combined with the graphical user areas of the Mayuzumi reference because both would not be displayed concurrently and, therefore, would be of no benefit to the user, such as for "directing the user's

attention to a first selectable graphical user area,” as recited in claim 1. Thus, there would be no reason to combine these references.

Further, such drop-down menus are part of the graphical user interface (see Applicants’ Figs. 1 and 13C) to which the step indication in the graphical overlay may refer. The step indications may also refer to drop-down menu items. Conversely, the drop-down menu items are not themselves step indications.

Moreover, the combination of the two references does not teach, suggest, or provide motivation for claim 1 as currently amended (“descriptors, corresponding to the steps and distinct from the graphical user areas, that are highlighted in a manner indicating which step is being performed”). If the Mayuzumi descriptors were placed in the Perks drop-down menus, they would not be “highlighted in a manner indicating which step is being performed” because they would not be concurrently displayed as a step is being performed since the drop-down menu would disappear when the user interacts with the graphical user area to perform a given task.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 should be allowed over Mayuzumi in view of Perks under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Independent claims 12, 23, and 24 are being amended in a manner similar to claim 1. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that these claims should be allowed for similar reasons as described above with respect to claim 1.

Because claims 2-11, 13-22, and 24-34 depend from claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits these claims should be allowed for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which they depend.

Claim 22 is being amended to correct a typographical error.

Claims 7, 18, and 30 are being amended in accordance with the amendments of the independent claims from which they respectively depend. Support for these claim amendments is found in these same claims as originally filed.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all now pending claims (Claims 1-34) are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. Applicant requests the Examiner to call the undersigned for an Examiner's Interview to expedite prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,

HAMILTON, BROOK, SMITH & REYNOLDS, P.C.

By Mark B. Solomon
Mark B. Solomon
Registration No. 44,348
Telephone: (978) 341-0036
Facsimile: (978) 341-0136

Concord, MA 01742-9133
Dated: 8/9/04